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Philosophy of Teaching

When it comes to teaching there are many aspects I value in which I believe drive teachers to grow as professionals, but also, drive students to become the second language learner they would like to be. From my own learning experiences and observations from my schooling, I have come to understand the difficulty and drive one must have for teaching. It is by those experiences, observations, and knowledge that has helped me to choose certain aspects important to my classroom. Those aspects include, but are not limited to, 1.) Incorporating meaningful activities, 2.) Ensuring learning is a fun and enjoyable process, and 3.) Making certain cooperative language use is integrated.

Using meaningful activities in the classroom is very important to ensure the learning process for students is fun, relevant, and goal achieving. I can recall being in language classrooms in the past where activities were given to students that were extraneous and did not help with the teachers' lessons. Students would then have to look for outside resources or remain confused, and eventually, if the lessons or material still were not learned students would end up doing horribly on exams. It was by this experience I realized how important it is for activities to be meaningful, significant, and relevant to the lessons/material for comprehension. One great way, I believe, to increase meaningfulness in lessons is to allow students to work in groups of three or four with fellow peers. Not only will students collaborate together to solve problems, but also it will help them feel comfortable using language skills. Students can express their ideas, listen to others' ideas, and contently share ideas with the entire class. It is a way to allow students to take on the role of the teacher and learn from others without really being aware of it.

I also find it imperative that the learning process for students be fun and enjoyable. During my schooling years, I found learning easier when activities made students laugh. A good example I always remember is a team building exercise called the human knot, where students must work together to untie themselves. This activity is not only amusingly funny, but incorporates the importance of teamwork and order for students to achieve their goal. It is activities with meaning and significance that help teachers' achieve comprehension in students' learning.

Incorporating cooperative language use in the classroom is also an important aspect for second language teaching. Language use in society will put pressure on students who are learning a second language; so maintaining a classroom that revolves around cooperative language can help keep students at ease and tension free. An example I have contemplated and decided on is to exclude competitive activities in the classroom. I remember the pressure competition put on students to win, to be better than someone else or everyone else, to win a prize, or even to win the attention of the teacher. After each competition there was a winner or a group of winners, and the rest of the class may have felt less intelligent or compatible. Language learning should not be a competition but an accommodating process that will guide students to fulfill their second language goals they set for themselves.

Overall, I have learned that second language learning is a process that requires patience and endurance from both the teacher and the students. Motivation, persistence, and consistency are all important for academic and personal achievement. Activities that are appropriate and pertinent to every lesson being taught is highly important along with enjoyable and entertaining activities that engrave lessons into the minds of students for

their comprehension. Classrooms that value and envelop cooperative language use rather than competitive or manipulative language use help students to be successful in second language learning and thrive in their academics. It is by these I would like to integrate in the classroom, into my own teaching experiences, and into the lives of my students.